

REMARKS

In view of the preceding amendments and the comments which follow, and pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.111, amendment and reconsideration of the Office Action, mailed on December 29, 2004 is respectfully requested by Applicants.

Summary

Claims 1 and 13 stand rejected. Claim 1 has been amended. No new matter has been introduced as a result of the amendment.

Claims 1 and 13 are pending following entry of the present amendment.

Interview Summary

A phone interview with the Examiner was initiated by Applicant Agent, Kader Gacem, on March 1, 2005. During the interview, Applicant's Agent remarked to the Examiner that the claimed partial insulating layer is provided in the tip region rather than in the rear end region of the thin film magnetic head. As such, the claimed partial insulating layer is distinct from Heim's insulating layer I2 relied upon by the Examiner as a basis for the 35 USC 102(b) rejection of Claim 1. Applicant's Agent further suggested amending Claim 1 to clarify the position of the claimed partial insulating layer in the thin film magnetic head. The Examiner acknowledged the distinction between these two insulating layers, and acquiesced that the suggested amendment of Claim 1 would overcome the relied upon prior art.

Applicants' Agent thanks the Examiner for the friendly and productive interview.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Heim et al. (Heim) (U.S. Patent 5,793,578). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Applicants have nevertheless rewritten Claim 1 to clarify the claimed invention and to remove any ambiguity that may have been the basis for the rejection.

Pending Claim 1 is directed to a thin film magnetic head. The thin film magnetic head comprising a lower core layer, a bottom pole layer, a nonmagnetic gap layer, an upper core layer, and a coil layer.

As amended, Claim 1 now recites that the upper core layer comprises a tip region and a rear end region. Further, a space between the tip region of the upper core layer and the bottom pole layer comprises a first portion extending backward from the surface facing the recording medium in the height direction, and a second portion extending backward from the end edge of the first portion in the height direction. In this second portion of the tip region, a partial insulating layer is formed on the gap layer and on a first insulating layer. In contrast, Heim is silent about a partial insulating layer being formed in the tip region of the thin film magnetic head. The Examiner stated that this partial insulating layer is disclosed by Heim as insulating layer I2. However, Heim's insulating layer I2 is positioned in the rear end region instead of the tip region of the thin film magnetic head.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is allowable over Heim, as well as dependent Claim 13 for at least the same reason. Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of Claims 1 and 13 under 35 US 102(b) be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that this application is now in condition for allowance, and favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and remarks is respectfully requested. Applicants believe a one-month extension is due, and a corresponding check is enclosed. Allowance of Claims 1 and 13 at an early date is earnestly solicited. If, there are any fees due, Applicants request that this paper constitutes any necessary petition and authorizes the Commissioner to charge any underpayment, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 23-1925.

If the examiner finds that there are any outstanding issues which may be resolved by a telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,
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